

CALFED BAY-DELTA WATERSHED PROGRAM

BDAC Watershed Work Group Meeting Summary

The Bay-Delta Advisory Council (BDAC) Watershed Work Group met on November 20, 1998, in Sacramento. The BDAC Watershed Work Group (Work Group) was created to address the public's request to have more participation in the CALFED Watershed Program (Watershed Program). The Work Group provides a forum for stakeholders covering a broad geographic area and wide array of interests. Attendees of the Work Group meetings have direct interaction with the Watershed Program's Interagency Watershed Advisory Team (IWAT) and an opportunity to review and comment on Watershed Program draft documents. In addition, the Work Group may provide input to the BDAC on issues related to the Watershed Program.

Introductions

Martha Davis (BDAC/Sierra Nevada Alliance), co-chair of the Work Group, began the meeting with introductions. A list of meeting participants is included (Attachment A). A meeting agenda and the Draft Watershed Program Plan (Program Plan), dated October 23, 1998, were distributed.

Review of Agency Comments

John Lowrie (NRCS/CALFED Watershed Program Manager) reviewed the comments received from federal and state agencies during the internal review period of Draft CALFED Common Program Plans. Comments of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggested that the Watershed Program focus its attention on promoting collaboration between CALFED and local watershed groups, supporting the infrastructure of such groups, developing an effective education and outreach program, and providing local and regional forums for integration of CALFED activities. Furthermore, it was suggested that the concept of watershed management, or a watershed strategy, should be better disseminated throughout the entire CALFED Program.

Some meeting participants responded and suggested that the Watershed Program not narrow its scope as EPA suggested, but leave it intentionally broad. The Work Group was in agreement, however, with EPA's statement that an overarching paradigm should be embraced by the entire CALFED Program regarding the notion of watershed management.

Staged Implementation

A discussion was raised regarding CALFED's staged implementation process. Some meeting participants are of the opinion that CALFED should focus on the first seven years of implementation only. There is not an adequate amount of existing information to plan for Stage 2 and 3. CALFED staff should therefore modify their approach and re-focus their analysis on Stage 1 only. Furthermore, the upcoming EIR/EIS should include a vision encompassing a 30-year span, but the analysis should only cover a seven year timeframe.

Financing

The Work Group was informed that the estimated funding amount for the Watershed Program is currently \$270 million for the first seven years of implementation. This amount is only a rough estimate and may be re-evaluated. Sharing the costs of implementation based on benefits created is the cornerstone principle of the CALFED Financial Strategy. Currently, funding for the Watershed Program is divided between state, federal, and user fees. The Work Group struggled with the task of how the money should be divvied up or how Stage 1 actions should be prioritized. After some discussion, it was decided that this task would be attempted again after a more complete financing package is developed by CALFED. In addition, it was noted that the concept of adaptive management should be applied to the finance decision making process.

Draft Watershed Program Plan

Dennis Bowker (Napa County RCD/CALFED) led a group discussion on various sections of the Program Plan. A similar discussion took place at the November 2, 1998, Work Group Meeting in Modesto; however, only the primary elements were reviewed at that time.

The following is a summary of the comments received during the meeting.

Geographic Scope

- The Program Plan does not specifically address what geographic regions are covered. This may be a concern to some stakeholders due to the fact that the CALFED Program often refers to the term “watershed” to describe those regions above the major dams and below the Carquinez Strait. Clarification should be made in this section to specifically state what areas are included in the geographic scope.

Glossary

- The terms “locally-led,” “community,” and “stakeholders” should be defined and included in the glossary.

Implementation Strategy

- Clarification should be made that participation in the Watershed Program is voluntary and that landowners retain the ultimate authority with respect to their land.
- The Principles for Participation state that watershed activities should have demonstrable community support. It will be difficult and subjective for CALFED to identify demonstrable support. Furthermore, it is often difficult for a watershed project/group to obtain such support.
- The Principles for Participation will be used to develop the criteria for funding of watershed projects; landowner involvement should also be a critical component in this development.
- Multiple terms are used to identify the Bay-Delta (Bay-Delta system, greater Bay-Delta, etc.); one term should be utilized throughout the document.
- The goal and objectives of the Watershed Program should be reviewed to ensure that they are measurable.

Implementation Strategy Continued

- The sustainability of watershed programs and healthy watersheds should be emphasized in this section.
- Language regarding a commitment to long-term monitoring should be included in this section.

Adaptive Management and Monitoring

- A discussion regarding the importance of testing hypothesis should be included in this element.

Watershed Processes

- The discussion regarding liability and indemnification for environmental restoration work should also include environmental education. In addition, this section should be presented in either the “Education and Outreach” element or the “Coordination and Assistance” element. Similarly, the discussion regarding technical assistance should be moved as well.
- The phrase “comprehensive suite of benefit analysis,” under the first bullet, should be replaced with more straight-forward language.

Stage I Actions

- Education should be included in the list of Watershed Program actions.
- Some of the Stage I actions are redundant.

Overall Structure

The structure of the Program Plan should be examined and revised to make it clear to the reader that actual “on the ground projects” are indeed a key component of the Plan. There is currently very little discussion of watershed projects within the five primary elements (Coordination and Assistance, Adaptive Management and Monitoring, Education and Outreach, Integration and Collaboration with other Common Programs, and Watershed Processes and Relationships). California residents, and Congress, want to see positive actions. Language should be added to better illustrate the relationship between watershed actions and the primary elements.

Wrap-up

The next Work Group meeting was scheduled for Friday, January 8, 1999, in Sacramento (meeting location to be announced). The Mono Lake Committee plans to give a presentation on recent activities in the Southern California watersheds.

Name	Affiliation
Barris, Lynn	Butte Environmental Council
Bill, Demery	Grindstone Indian Rancheria
Boles, Jerry	Department of Water Resources - Red Bluff
Bowker, Dennis	Napa County RCD/CALFED
Brown, David	CSU Chico - Geoscience Department
Brown, Karen	Department of Water Resources
Burrows, Teri	Grindstone Indian Reservation
Castleberry, Dan	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/IWAT
Chang, Phil	UC Berkeley CA Watershed Policy Project
Coburn, John	State Water Contractors
Cooper Carter, Kristin	CSU/Chico Research Foundation/Environmental Resource Program
Cornelius, James	Tetra Tech
Cornwall, Caitlin	Sonoma Ecology Center
Dale, Richard	Sonoma Ecology Center
Davis, Martha	BDAC/Sierra Nevada Alliance
Denzler, Sara	Department of Water Resources
Dockins, June	Freelance Writer
Drake, Nettie	Panoche/Silver Creek CRMP
Genaris, Mark	EIP Associates
Harthorn, Allen	Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy
Henly, Russ	CA Department of Forestry/IWAT
Jerauld, Frank	Amador RCD - Jackson
Knecht, Mary Lee	Jones & Stokes/CALFED Consultant
Kramer, Dan	
Liebersbach, Debbie	Turlock Irrigation District
Lowrie, John	USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service/CALFED
Makowski, Tom	USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service
Nakamura, Gary	Shasta-Tehama Bioregional Council
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Ohlemutz, Rolf	Contra Costa Water District
Parkin, Ann Marie	Metropolitan Water District
Patterson, Steve	EDAW
Phipps, Jeff	CALFED Staff Consultant-Category III Restoration
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Ruffolo, Jennifer	California Research Bureau
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Sime, Frasier	Department of Water Resources
Spurlock, Hank	
Tupper, Julie	U.S. Forest Service/IWAT
Washburn, Tim	Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency
Weber, Frances	Mono Lake Committee
Wills, Leah	Plumas Corporation
Wollan, Otis	Placer County Water Agency
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